

Chula Vista Recreation Department

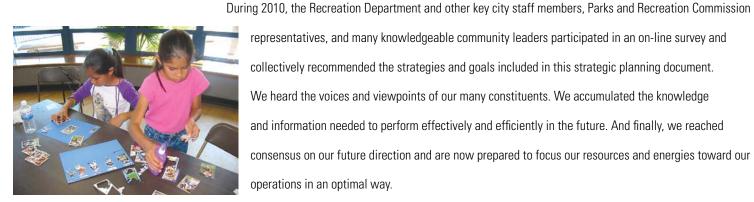
> Strategie Plan 2011-2016



## A Message from the Recreation Department Director

Our Recreation Department's mission is to enrich our community through recreational opportunities and services. Over the past eight to ten years, the Chula Vista community has initially seen expansion in the east and redevelopment in the western portions of the city and more recently, an economic downturn unprecedented in recent history. Only through a thoughtful and careful strategic planning process can the Recreation Department keep pace with this rapidly changing environment and stay "on mission."





representatives, and many knowledgeable community leaders participated in an on-line survey and collectively recommended the strategies and goals included in this strategic planning document. We heard the voices and viewpoints of our many constituents. We accumulated the knowledge and information needed to perform effectively and efficiently in the future. And finally, we reached consensus on our future direction and are now prepared to focus our resources and energies toward our

Most importantly, we now have a unified vision of the critical place that recreation occupies in

our social fabric. Our vision is one of a community that achieves learning, self-discovery, balance and essential life skills through recreation.

operations in an optimal way.

We extend our sincerest thanks to all of the people who made this process possible.



Buck Martin, Director, Chula Vista Recreation Department

### Why Plan?

Excellent recreation programs are no coincidence. They come about as the result of careful and thoughtful planning that takes into account the goals the department seeks to achieve and the needs of the public who must "buy into" those goals. Our successful strategic



planning process has allowed us to realize what we do well and what we have to improve, to have a clear sense of our direction, and has strengthened our ability to engage others in our guest to fulfill our vision.

### Acknowledgments

We are indebted to the numerous individuals who offered their time and talent, and who shared their knowledge of our community. This strategic planning process would not have been possible without their collective wisdom and willingness to work together for the benefit of the Recreation Department. Our sincere thanks to the following, with special thanks to Management Interns Manuel Rios and Matthew Slotman, who designed, administered and compiled results of the on-line survey tool utilized for the Strategic Plan process:

COMMUNITY
REPRESENTATIVES
Kathy Aceves
Jessica Battaglia
John Baumgarden
Ken Baumgartner
Sandra Bishop
Karl Bradley
Rebecca Carson
Laura Cervantes
<b>Guy Chambers</b>
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John Vogel Olga West Tina Williams Paul Woods Scott Woodward **CITY STAFF** Kelley Bacon Agnes Bernardo Joe Gamble Roxanna Kennedy Stephanie Kingston Mandy Mills Irene Mosely Lisa Partee Pablo Quilantan **Emerald Randolph** Scott Tullock **MANAGEMENT INTERNS** Manuel Rios Matthew Slotman

### Statements of Mission, Vision, Values

#### RECREATION DEPARTMENT

#### MISSION STATEMENT

We enrich our community through recreational opportunities and services.

#### **RECREATION DEPARTMENT VALUES**

- Integrity—We follow the highest moral standards and are honest and trustworthy.
- Respect—We treat everyone with regard and consideration while appreciating the differences among our patrons.
- Professionalism—We are committed to the highest standards of character and professional behavior.
- Accountability—We take ownership of our decisions and are answerable for our actions.
- Commitment—We have an obligation to our community to provide the best possible recreation services.
- Teamwork—We believe teamwork is at the core of our values—we work cooperatively together for the benefit of all.
- Fun—We believe joyful, exuberant activity is an essential part of life.

### RECREATION DEPARTMENT VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is a community that achieves learning, selfdiscovery, balance, and essential life skills through recreation.

### CONSENSUS ON MAJOR ISSUES FACING RECREATION

- Programs and services continue
   to be reduced due to budget
   reductions and a corresponding
   paradigm shift toward a "pay-to-play" philosophy as
   opposed to a true community service philosophy
- Resource availability and facility availability...in addition to budget reductions and resulting service level cuts, development and design do not meet the increasing demands/expectations of our growing population

- More productive and balanced leisure time is needed for a healthy society; budget reductions and resulting service level cuts contribute to putting more youths at risk of health and wellness issues such as obesity and type II diabetes as well as various forms of delinquency and crime
- Staffing reductions due to budget reductions result in a tremendous loss of full-time, professional expertise as well as a large source of employment for youth
- The benefits and scope of recreation programs are not adequately communicated to decision-makers, collaborators and the public-at-large

#### **CITY OF CHULA VISTA**

#### MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Chula Vista is committed to build and nurture a progressive and cohesive community which values our diversity, respects our citizens, honors our legacy, and embraces the opportunities of the future.



#### CITY OF CHULA VISTA VALUES

- Commitment
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Achievement

City of Chula Vista Recreation Department Strategic Plan 2011-2016

### Executive Summary

The thought and care that the Recreation

Department's Strategic Planning Steering Committee

brought to this strategic planning process was inspiring
to all participants.

The City of Chula Vista Recreation Department
Strategic Plan 2011-2016, a revision of the existing
2003-2008 Recreation Department Strategic Plan,
offers a series of broad strategic initiatives (directional
statements) and a list of detailed goals under each
initiative for the Department to achieve during the next
five years. The update of the Department's Strategic Plan



for 2011-2016 not only addresses the status of initiatives and goals from the previous plan, but also the economic downturn that has forced cities and recreation agencies state- and nation-wide to reassess their operations and

methods of service delivery. Recreation Department and other city staff members, plus Parks and Recreation Commission members and community volunteers provided needed perspective and critical input for the information and conclusions presented here.

This strategic plan will help the Recreation

Department to focus its priorities in response to a rapidly

The Recreation Department's chances for future success are already greatly enhanced by its commitment to building a vision of success that is shared among all.

evolving environment and ensure that staff is working toward shared and agreed-upon goals. The Recreation Department's chances for future success are already greatly enhanced by its commitment to building a vision of success that is shared among all.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

In September 2010 Buck Martin, Recreation
Department Director, met with his management staff and
City Management Interns Matthew Slotman and Manuel
Rios to assess the Recreation Department's readiness
for planning, identify the specific issues to be addressed,
the assessment tool to utilize and decide on whom to
involve. In addition, review and endorsement of the
Department's Mission/Vision/Values was undertaken.
A twelve-week timetable was created for conducting
the public input phase of the strategic planning process.
Subsequent meetings were held to discuss the format
for solicitation of stakeholder, staff and public input and
recruitment of stakeholder committee members.

An on-line survey via "Survey Monkey," to be based on the framework of the 2003-2008 Strategic Plan, was selected as the assessment tool and was designed over

the next month by the City Management Interns with input and direction from the Recreation Department management staff. The following areas of focus from the previous plan were maintained:

- Center and School Programs
- Aguatics
- Athletics
- Senior Programs
- Therapeutics and Accommodation
- Staff and Volunteers
- Communications
- Facilities and Fields
- Finance
- Management

This strategic plan will help the Recreation Department to focus its priorities in response to a rapidly evolving environment. Concurrently, Department management staff conducted a review of Stakeholder Committee members and represented organizations from the 2003-2008 Strategic Plan, verifying current

positions and making revisions noting successors to the positions where necessary. An introductory letter from the Recreation Director inviting organizational representatives to participate in the development of the 2011-2016 revision was prepared and sent to all identified individuals.





Once recruitment of members for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee was completed, in late September a second letter, containing a link to the online survey was circulated to all committee members. Results were collected in October and compiled.

Members of the Stakeholder Committee were invited to provide additional input in-person and participated in public review of the survey results at the Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting of November 18.

In late November, Recreation Department
Supervisors completed the same on-line survey and
in late December and early January, members of
the general public did the same via a link from the
Recreation Department website. These two additional
sets of survey results were also compiled and overlaid
with the input from the Stakeholder Committee.

After final input from the Stakeholder Committee, Recreation staff and the general public was compiled and analyzed, the Recreation Department management team met for the purpose of identifying and prioritizing program and management goals and reviewing possible objectives to be enacted during the next five years.

### Strategic Plan Initiatives

#### **FINANCE**

Photo by Mike Armbrust

#### Preserve departmental budgetary resources

- Maintain Recreation Department as an essential city service
  - Advocate to ensure continued city financial support and improve public and decision-makers' support for Department's programs

#### Broaden revenue opportunities

- Explore alternative sources of revenues/ support, (e.g., grants, fundraising, concessions, vending machines) to aid restoration of eliminated hours and programming
- Explore opportunities for collaborative funding requests
- Increase revenues from non-General Fund sources
- Update Master Fee Schedule to reflect market rate
- Explore opportunities to rent facilities to outside organizations when not used for department programs
- Explore increasing fees for YSC organizations and adult groups using sports fields
- Explore utilizing vendors to provide programming
- Consider membership and/or nominal drop-in use fees for appropriate activities

# Align financial practices, reporting capabilities and expenditures with Recreation Strategic Plan

- Update operational model to address current economic conditions and shift to a "pay-to-play" model where appropriate
- Broaden staff involvement and understanding in financial planning and evaluation
- Identify both costs and benefits of programs
- Develop balanced guidelines for the extent of cost recovery possible for department programs

#### **STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

#### Review staff organization

 Re-examine current staff structure, job responsibilities, and job descriptions (full-time and part-time staff) particularly in regard to revenue generation



- Work with Human Resources on a classification study to examine current staff structure, salary levels, and job classifications (full-time and part-time staff)
- Re-evaluate current staffing model and develop a model for existing and future recreational facilities that restores full-time supervisory positions eliminated by budget reductions, and involve Human Resources, as appropriate

#### Optimize volunteer program

- Expand use and role of volunteers
- Develop a comprehensive volunteer management system in conjunction with Human Resources

#### Enhance staff training and development

- Explore professional standards and certifications for professional development, safety, and future needs
- Review certification parameters for aquatic personnel (full-time and part-time)
- Develop training needs assessment

#### **CENTER AND SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

# Maximize resources and collaborative use of community centers

- Develop plan with geographic considerations to restore eliminated hours at all facilities with emphasis on western portion of city
- Restore fee-free activities addressing healthy lifestyles at all facilities
- Explore feasibility of further integration of facilities, programs and personnel among recreation providers in the community
- Build upon existing relationships with community agencies
- Examine opportunities for more center-based teen, senior, and therapeutics programs
- Coordinate classes and activities department-wide for consistency, efficiency and effectiveness
- Continue to refine how citywide youth and adult sports programs can be more geographically based
- Expand use of bilingual marketing materials

#### **FACILITIES AND FIELDS**

#### Optimize the use of existing facilities and fields

- Explore and develop means to increase revenue
- Examine percentage of active/passive use areas for possible upgrades of lesser-used areas
- Examine use of technology for improved efficiency and cost savings (e.g. computerized lighting system)
- Continue to utilize a schedule of rotating use of city fields and recreational facilities that allows for improved facility maintenance and field rejuvenation ensuring the safety of all participants.
- Continue to make sports fields available to YSC organizations
- Re-examine current procedures for field allocations to youth and adult sports teams to ensure maximization and prioritization of use as well as preservation of resources
- Explore a means to allow YSC organizations to contribute to field maintenance and financial support of the Park Ranger Program and the Departmentprovided liaison to the YSC
- Re-examine joint use of fields and facilities with the two school districts to determine ways to improve

service to the public and maintain existing sports fields

# Maximize citywide resources for recreational purposes (active/passive)

- Make available additional facilities and fields as quickly as possible
- Explore use of temporary sites, including non-traditional usages, (e.g. skate parks)
- Explore feasibility of using utility easements
- Explore increased use of passive/non programmed resources, (e.g. golf courses, greenbelts, trails)

#### Explore and implement park development

- Consider shifting resources to centers and programs being utilized more extensively than others
- Continue to develop a sports commission to promote regional use of facilities and new revenue streams for department and city

- Explore opportunities for increasing the availability of parks, and recreational facilities and spaces (new and existing) with emphasis on the northwest portion of the city
- Explore the feasibility and desirability of the development of public/private tournament facilities
- Enhance recreational opportunities and facilities in Western Chula Vista
- Continue to plan and implement the approved recreational facilities and parks in the master planned communities

#### COMMUNICATIONS

#### Improve marketing and communications

- Establish a marketing strategy and plan incorporating needs assessment data and providing consistent messages and branding opportunities
- Investigate alternative methods and funding sources for marketing and publicity
- Advocate and convey to stakeholders the broad societal benefits of recreation programs
- Commit to consistently communicating the mission, vision and values of the Recreation Department to the community
- Strengthen methods of communication to all stakeholders to increase awareness of the needs, benefits, and successes of Recreation

# Determine current recreational interests of community

- Identify current demand/needs
- Determine if data from existing Park Master Plan survey is still valid
- Ensure that park and center designs meet community needs
- Consider new survey tools and methodologies

Broaden awareness of what is available in the recreational region, including passive/ non-programmed resources (e.g. golf courses, greenbelts, trails)

• Establish priorities and determine ways to increase awareness

#### **AQUATICS**

LOMA VERDE RECREATION

#### Determine optimal use for facilities

- Evaluate effectiveness of current schedules, usage and class length
- Investigate how to deliver more programs (must be cost effective) during periods of lower demand
- Solicit alternative activities (e.g., water-polo, kayaking) to reach a broader "audience"

#### Improve Aquatics program delivery

- Investigate and encourage program collaborations with community partners including use of non-city owned facilities
- Focus on current and future community needs and trends for programs and facilities in light of current fiscal restraints
- Expand awareness of aquatics programs and use of nools
- Continue to make public and staff safety the top priority
- Continue to pursue development of a large, multi-use aquatic facility in eastern portion of city



#### Re-determine program philosophy, priorities, and effectiveness

- Maintain support of Youth Sports Council (YSC) and re-evaluate field allocation policies and other related policies and fees
- Explore new ways to evaluate program effectiveness
- Continue to develop plans for
- enhancement and expansion of youth and adult athletics and related programs (e.g. physically challenged and seniors)
- Re-evaluate field allocation policies, other related policies, and fees for adult sports leagues
- Continue to clarify the direction of athletics to all stakeholders



#### Optimize program delivery

- Balance revenue enhancements and program growth
- Investigate alternatives for improved maintenance of fields
- Re-evaluate design and uses of current facilities/fields in collaboration with Building and Park Construction and Park Maintenance Division
- Improve collaborations with other agencies
- Determine how citywide youth and adult sports programs can be more geographically based

## Conduct comprehensive community-wide program evaluation

- Evaluate validity of trends determined by present Parks Master Plan surveys
- Examine what athletic programs are offered by other agencies
- Determine current customer base, participation and attendance levels, and existing barriers to participation
- Investigate using multiple survey methodologies, (e.g. different surveys for children vs. adults or parents)

#### **SENIORS**

#### **Determine future direction of Senior programming**

- Preserve current level of senior programming
- Re-evaluate the concept/perception of what the term "senior" means, given the aging of the Baby Boomer generation
- Continue to advocate independent living
- Update information about other recreation programs and senior-serving community organizations
- Investigate opportunities for intergenerational programs (age integration/cross-age tutoring)
- Increase awareness of Norman Park Center as a center for information and referral services

# Reconsider the needs of adults by the following age group: 50-65; 65-85; 85+

- Reevaluate activities programs and facilities to adapt to needs and desires of expanding senior population in light of fiscal constraints
- Encourage seniors to maintain physical well being through all recreational programs (athletics, aquatics)
- Continue to provide opportunities that meet the emotional/social needs of the senior population
- Continue to provide opportunities for lifelong learning

#### **MANAGEMENT**

# Commit to the Mission, Vision, and Values and operate the Recreation Department in an ethical and professional manner that is responsive to, and valued by, the public and staff

- Ensure the Recreational management team provides staff with the information, resources, educational opportunities, support, and direction to meet the needs of the public
- Align Department initiatives and goals with the city's strategic themes



 Continue to provide opportunities for seniors to contribute their knowledge and skills to the community

# Maximize relationships throughout community and within the City

- Work with other city departments and community agencies that address senior issues, (e.g. transportation and affordable housing)
- Continue, and increase, intra-departmental partnerships
- Continue to utilize the expertise and resources of the Commission on Aging
- Strategically partner with other community organizations

#### **THERAPEUTICS**

# Determine future direction of Therapeutics programming

- Develop plan to address ADA accommodations for requesting participants
- Consider restoration of program as fiscal constraints are alleviated

- Continue to commit to outcome-based program management and a performance measurement system
- Improve program efficiency
- Commit to advance planning and ongoing assessment
- Be more customer focused
- Continue to provide safe and secure programs and facilities to the public by a well-trained staff
- Develop a clear organizational structure that supports decision-making, teamwork, risk taking, problem solving and innovation
- Develop a decision-making process and structure that supports decisions being implemented
- Enhance lines of communication and support the flow of information and feedback between and among managers and staff
- Continue to provide overall direction to Friends of Parks and Recreation non-profit organization
- Seek new "win-win" collaborations and strengthen existing relationships
- Revisit city's administrative distinction between parks and recreation
- Continue to commit to universal accessibility

#### **City Council**

Chervl Cox. Mayor

Patricia Aguilar

Pamela Bensoussan

Steve Castaneda

Rudy Ramirez

#### **City Manager**

Jim Sandova

#### **Parks and Recreation Commission**

John Vogel, Chair

Elizabeth Scott, Vice-Chair

Jan Buddingh, Jr

**Guy Chambers** 

Kathy Cien-Mayer

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